



YOUTH EXCHANGE UPDATE: It takes a lot of courage to spend a year of high school in Indonesia, South Korea, and Sweden. Likewise, to come to the United States from countries such as Thailand, Brazil, Poland, Belgium, and Taiwan requires bravery and a sense of adventure. But courage was NOT in short supply on Saturday, January 25th, as our current inbound international students in District 5580, along with our upcoming U.S. outbound students, braved the -24 F temperatures to participate (with no complaints about the cold) in the annual Winter Rendezvous at Deep Portage Conservation Camp near Walker MN.

The camp's traditional fur trader and lumberjack outdoor competition coincided with an entire Youth Exchange weekend retreat held at Deep Portage. The highlight of the weekend was the Friday night "country reveal" for the outbound students, as they

learned their foreign placements for Fall 2026. The excitement was soon followed by intense orientation sessions over the next two days, covering everything from Rotary International requirements, health insurance, to succeeding academically overseas while surviving culture shock and second language acquisition.

Throughout the weekend, our inbound students from around the world offered encouraging tips to the excited US students departing in August for the adventure of a lifetime. The final session for all the students was a presentation on the peace cornerstone of Rotary's mission and peace fellowships / scholarships. This was followed by a group activity exploring how our service projects around Rotary International's seven areas of focus build environments of peace by addressing the underlying causes of conflict. Rotary Youth Exchange "builds peace one student at a time" and this great group of young people are already well on their way!



IB:Piotr Ilnicki - POLAND (Ely); **OB:**Lucy Filipczak - to INDONESIA (Ashland); **IB:**"Namo" Tharathep Inthirach – THAILAND (Park Rapids);**OB:**Laura Horning - to SOUTH KOREA (Bismarck); **OB:**"Emmi" Emery Rousch to SWEDEN (Ashland); **IB:** Ana de Souza Prata– BRAZIL (Moorhead); **IB:**Laly Parent - BELGIUM (Fergus Falls); **IB:**"Anthony" Bo-Yih Lai - TAIWAN (Bismarck)

